

Drought Related Asks for Regulatory changes, funding or technical assistance

List of Speakers:

- 1.) Carre Brown, 1st District Supervisor, and Chair of Drought Ad Hoc Committee
- 2.) Shawn Padi, Tribal Chair, Hopland Band of Pomo Indians spadi@hoplandtribe.com
- 3.) Chuck Morse, Mendocino County Agricultural Commissioner morsec@co.mendocino.ca.us
- 4.) Janet Pauli, Inland Water and Power Commission Chair iwpc@mendoiwpc.com
- 5.) Bill Koehler, General Manager of Redwood Valley County Water District
gmrvcwd@pacific.net
- 6.) Doug Crane, City of Ukiah Councilmember doug.crane@craneofukiah.com
- 7.) [Sheriff Allman, Mendocino County Sheriff](#)
- 8.) [Chief John Bartlett, Ukiah Valley Fire District, Hopland Fire, Ukiah City Fire](#)

Cal OES Coastal Regional Administrator Jodi Traversaro: Jodi.Traversaro@CalOES.ca.gov

Legislative Support:

Ask: Support Rep. Huffman's bill HR 3839

Lead Agency: Governor's Office

Local POC: This request was made by multiple parties at the meetings

Enforcement:

Note: OES has reached out to the California Sheriff Association and Fire Chiefs to create a working group to address some drought related public safety issues. Felicia Marcus would like to connect Tom Allman to someone in her division. Sheriff Allman is also working with Assembly member Wes Chesbro on this issue.

Ask: Mendocino Sheriff Tom Allman explained that local law enforcement is spread thin and has difficulty enforcing against water theft. For example, water was stolen out of a water tender used to transport water for firefighting in Potter Valley, and millions of gallons of water are being diverted illegally for marijuana grows. To what extent can state funding for water rights enforcement be provided to local law enforcement to reimburse costs for enforcement activities? Can the State Water Board offer trainings or a resource phone number to local law enforcement regarding water rights?

Lead Agency: State Water Resources Control Board

Local POC: Mendocino County Sheriff Tom Allman. sheriff@co.mendocino.ca.us

Status:

Ask: Is there any funding for capital investments to protect against water theft? For example, locks on local fire hydrants cost about \$200 per hydrant. Fire hydrants could be protected against theft through a grant to local fire departments.

Lead Agency: Department of Water Resources

Local POC: Local Fire Chiefs and Mendocino County Sheriff Tom Allman.
sheriff@co.mendocino.ca.us

| Status:

Ask: Consider reimbursement of local agencies for costs spent on water theft. For example, last year the local sheriff's office paid for overtime for fish and wildlife staff to investigate water theft. Consider a regional approach with Humboldt, Trinity, and Mendocino.

Lead Agency: Various

Local POC: Mendocino County Sheriff Tom Allman. sheriff@co.mendocino.ca.us

| Status:

Ask: Can DFW offer Wardens to partner with local law enforcement to monitor illegal diversions? Can CalFire partner with local law enforcement to verify tips regarding illegal diversion of water during arial fly overs?

Lead Agency: Department of Fish and Wildlife, CalFire

Local POC: Mendocino County Sheriff Tom Allman. sheriff@co.mendocino.ca.us

| Status:

Fire Safety:

Ask: The fire department may have issues locating surface water for firefighting. In the past water taken for firefighting has been returned. If that can't happen it could be a big problem because some people rely on their ponds for a water source. Mendocino typically sends engines out of county but may not be able to share resources this year.

Lead Agency: CalFire

Local POC: Fire Chief Tom McGan

| Status:

Funding for storage/efficiency:

Ask: The City of Ukiah would like to create a recycled water project, which could be used for agricultural watering. This would also reduce demand at Lake Mendocino. Ukiah would also like to refurbish wells and needs assistance with interties with other agencies. In the long term the City wants to increase water storage.

Lead Agency: Department of Water Resources

Local POC: Doug Crane. Brandon Merritt for Mendocino County can put staff in touch with the City of Ukiah. Brandon Merritt: merrittb@co.mendocino.ca.us 707-463-7236

| Status:

Ask: Small water agencies, such as Brooktrails Water District, have projects queued up to improve local reliability, but have difficulty funding the projects themselves due to their small number of ratepayers. Agencies like this need technical assistance with grant writing.

Lead Agency: Department of Water Resources

Local POC: Brooktrails Community Township General Manager Denise Rose, Drose@btcasd.org 707-459-0863

| Status:

Ask: Once the state bill is approved, can DWR engage in outreach (perhaps through ACWA?) to apprise water districts of available capital funding opportunities for such projects?

Lead Agency: California of Natural Resources, Department of Water Resources

Local POC: Not applicable

| Status:

Ask: \$1 million for securing the water supply.

Lead Agency: Department of Water Resources

Local POC: Dave Turner, Mayor of the City of Fort Bragg. dturner@fortbragg.com

| Status:

Increase Storage Capacity

Lake Mendocino

Ask: First, Help facilitate the passage of Rep. Huffman's bill (HR 3899- the Forecast Act). The bill sets up a process for a request to the Army Corps that includes science and state of the art forecasting, and gives the Army Corps 1 year to create a new rule curve, and another year to roll out the new rule curve.

Second, they need to re-operate the dam, which would cost the Russian River Flood Control District \$250,000 for a new rule curve, with intensive hydrological studies. The cost is passed onto the Flood Control District from the Army Corps. Cost share would be welcome, but the Flood Control District would come up with the money if it needed to. Note that this action cannot take place until after passage of HR 3899.

Second, support the recycled water project in Ukiah. Ukiah's water comes out of Lake Mendocino, if there was a recycled system in place, it could be used for agriculture watering, and there would be less demand for releases for agricultural water. Recycled water projects also require the construction of a pond, which increases operational flexibility in the system, for example, water in ponds can be used for frost control, thereby smoothing demand.

Finally, raise the dam. This creates carryover, more flexibility in the rule curve, and new storage. This is a long term solution, with a high cost. The feasibility study has been inactive for three years and is in danger of going inactive. Support funding for a feasibility study.

Note, the State Water Resources Control Board has been asked for a temporary urgency change petition 8 out of the 10 past years.

Local POC: Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control District Manager Sean White. c) 707-539-9170, rrfc@pacific.net; Sonoma County Water Agency, Grant Davis, Grant.Davis@scwa.ca.gov

| Status:

Interties and Operational Flexibility

Ask: Redwood Valley has an intake in Lake Mendocino which serves 4,000 people plus 2,200 acres of wine grapes. Redwood Valley does not have a working intertie with Calpella, in some places a fire truck is used as a pumping engine. Redwood Valley and Calpella would like help with creating a working intertie. This project needs a minimum of \$400,000.

Lead Agency: CDPH. Status: Mark Starr at CDPH is already working on a funding agreement, and will see if prop 84 funds can move more quickly. The cap is \$250,000 but that may increase with the drought bill. The cap was raised to \$500,000 in recent legislation.

Local POC: Redwood Valley Water District, Bill Koehler

Status:

Crop Insurance and Agricultural Issues

Ask: Mendocino Farm Bureau asked the state to ensure that crop failure as a result of curtailments or water use restrictions will not void farmers' crop insurance.

Lead Agency: CDFA. Status: Karen Ross has moved quickly and crop insurance will not be voided, we need to ensure this is reported back to the community.

Local POC: Mendocino Department of Agriculture Commissioner Chuck Morris, Devin Jones, Mendocino County Farm Bureau

Status:

Ask: Ensure local farmers and ranchers are aware of USDA and other state and federal drought programs. Some ranchers are selling off livestock early and at a lower than normal weight, having to truck in water, and/or having to pay very high prices for hay. The USDA deadline is coming up very soon.

Lead Agency: California Department of Food and Agriculture.

Local POC: Mendocino Department of Agriculture Commissioner Chuck Morris

Status:

Ask: Technical assistance with pruning vines for drought tolerance, connection with the UC system experts.

Lead Agency: UC Davis?

Local POC: Mendocino Department of Agriculture Commissioner Chuck Morris

Status:

Ask: Technical assistance or funding for frost protection for pears and wine grapes. Wind machines could be used rather than water in some areas.

Lead Agency: California Department of Food and Agriculture

Local POC: Mendocino Department of Agriculture Commissioner Chuck Morris

Status:

FERC license:

Ask: PG&E is requesting that gates at Lake Pillsbury be closed earlier than normal, which may require FERC approval. Wade would like to monitor and make sure that this happens.

Lead Agency: Department of Water Resources/State Water Resources Control Board

Status:

Army Corp rigidity on reservoir operations- Lake Mendocino:

Ask: Can DWR explore whether it is appropriate for our team to raise with the White House the need for the Army Corps to explore flexibility of reservoir operations to enable more water to be retained in reservoirs like Lake Mendocino?

Lead Agency: Natural Resources, Department of Water Resources

| Status:

Tribal Issues:

The tribes that attended were:

Coyote Valley, Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians, Hopland Band of Pomo Indians, and Lytton Rancheria. There were no tribal requests at this time.

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| Status:

Items in Progress:

CDFA outreach meeting

Congressman Huffman and Assembly member Wes Chesbro followed-up on Karen Ross' offer for CDFA to hold an outreach workshop on CDFA/USDA support on the North Coast. Meeting scheduled for March 19th in Cloverdale.

| Status:

Unresolved Issues:

Private wells

Concerns were raised about residents who have wells on their property that provide their drinking water that are going dry.

What specifically can the state do (if anything) to help these residents?

| Status:

Resources for Local Governments from the State and Federal Government:

OES 2014 Drought Assistance Programs Chart

[Federal Funding Program Matrix](#) (PDF, 419 kb)

[State Funding Program Matrix](#) (PDF, 423 kb)

[State Fed Funding DROPS Program Matrix](#) (PDF, 350 kb)

OPR memo regarding Local Government resources: going out within a week
Agency and Department Drought websites.

Ideas for Future Outreach:

At each meeting, provide a list of grant and loan opportunities, and a list of state and federal drought related programs and services available. Send it out electronically afterward to those who sign in at the meeting so that they have live links.

Designate a 'keeper of the asks' to take notes at each meeting, and follow up with state agencies and locals on anything requested or promised.

Constituencies not represented at this meeting:

Township of Mendocino
Other towns, including Fort Bragg
People who are not part of a water system
Additional local tribes

Attached letters received from local governments regarding their drought related needs:

The need for drought related assistance for each community which submitted a letter is summarized here. Please see the attached documents for more details.

Letter from Fort Bragg

- Help expediting SWRCB change petition to allow storage of water from Waterfall Gulch
- Grants, loans with principal forgiveness, and zero-interest loans, to increase water supply. The City has \$2.5 million in pending capital projects to develop water storage, which exceeds its debt capacity.

Letter from Willits

- Technical assistance from a groundwater hydrologist, a water engineer, and a grant coordinator
- Grant funds to cover the full cost of the \$2,100,000 emergency water supply project (the City has already received \$250,000 in Prop 84 funding, City officials are pursuing funding from USDA, SRF, CDBG, DWR, Cal EPA, and SWRCB.)
- Assistance negotiating with Caltrans to allow purple pipe in the right of way of the Willits bypass, to allow for increase mobility and use of recycled water
- Long term infrastructure improvements for water conservation, listed at page 2

Letter from Brooktrails Township Community Services District

- \$180,000-\$926,000 for drilling wells for a secondary water source
- Up to \$4,000,000 for increasing storage capacity in water tanks

Letter from Mendocino County

- Assistance with the Army Corp regarding water releases Lake Mendocino and the Russian River Watershed
- \$500,000 for an intertie between Redwood Valley County Water District, Calpella County Water District, and Millview County Water District
- Assistance with interties along the Mendocino Coast, which are estimated to cost at least \$750,000. Note: This intertie doesn't necessarily have the full support of all parties, and \$750,000 may be a very low cost estimate
- A permanent pumping station between the City of Ukiah and the Willow County Water District, costing approximately \$100,000
- Ukiah, the population center for the County, seeks \$24.5 million for a reclamation project to mitigate 2,000 acre feet of water withdrawn annually from the Russian River. The master reclamation plan is pending approval from the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- For more details see the attached letter, page 3.